



The Ministry of Health, UNICEF and partners have trained dozens of community health volunteers to raise awareness on how communities can prevent the spread of Ebola in Liberia

LIBERIA

Ebola Special Situation Report #2

23 November 2015



HIGHLIGHTS

- On 20 November 2015, the Government of Liberia confirmed three new cases of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Liberia from a family of six members from a suburb in the capital Monrovia. There are no new cases.
- A fourteen year old boy was confirmed as having Ebola on 19 November 2015 and was taken to an Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in Monrovia. He died on 23 November 2015. Two other family members were also confirmed as having Ebola the subsequent day and continue to receive treatment at the ETU.
- Three others, also from the same family, are under observation at the ETU. The mother's blood test has shown a high level of Ebola anti-bodies indicating a recent Ebola recovery. The two month old baby is showing antibodies which has been tentatively explained as coming from the mother and not from a recent infection. One child has tested negative.
- A further six households with over 64 persons are also under precautionary observation in the community.
- There are 32 health care workers on the contact list of whom ten are considered high risk. They will be under precautionary observation in a communal rented house and eight relocated to the site on 23 November 2015. Two have refused to move to the location.
- There are 139 contacts who are being followed and two additional who cannot be located.
- The Ebola vaccine will be introduced and only contacts and contacts-of-contacts will be vaccinated. Children six and under and pregnant women will not be vaccinated. They will be vaccinated very soon though date has not been firmly set.
- There are no currently known transmission risks associated with the boy who passes away (no known contact with a survivor or a sick person, someone who has recently travelled to Guinea or Sierra Leone, or attended a burial).

UNICEF RESPONSE

Child Protection

- Psychosocial support visits were undertaken with patients in the ETU, health care workers and households under precautionary observation. The visits have assisted in linking services to those affected and to overcome some barriers such as: facilitating a high risk contact to allow the lab team to take a blood sample, encouraging one of the positive cases to eat and receive treatment at the ETU and providing psychosocial support to the mother and family of the patient who passed away.
- UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) to register all children under observation and considered Ebola affected, and to set up an Interim Care Center (ICC) for any child who is without appropriate care during the 21 day precautionary observation period. UNICEF will also provide recreational materials to facilitate play for children at the ETU and under observation.

Nutrition

- UNICEF has ensured that ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF biscuits) is available at the ETU for the admitted patients and therapeutic milk was delivered in case it is required.
- An eight month old child of a contact has been linked to the county health nutrition team for support.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene

- UNICEF, as the WASH pillar co-lead, organized assessments of 11 schools in the hotspot, households under precautionary observation and the ETU where the current patients are located.
- Drinking water and water for washing is being provided to the health care workers and households under precautionary observation.
- Chlorine and back sprayers have been provided to partners to carry out the decontamination of the affected households and compounds, health facilities and school. All affected locations have been decontaminated.

Education

- The affected school was decontaminated on Friday and temperature checks by a nurse provided by a partner began 23 November 2015.
- Refresher training on the Safe School Guidelines were conducted on 23 November for 119 teachers, students and Parent Teacher Association members at the affected school by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education (MoH) staff.
- 33 students have been identified in the households under precautionary observation. Learning materials will be arranged so that the students can continue their studies at home.
- Psychosocial support has been arranged for the students at the school.
- Six schools with 1,358 students in the hotspot have been assessed as needing replenishment of the infection prevention and control (IPC) kits designed for schools in order to follow the Safe Schools Guidelines.

Communications for Development

- In preparation for the imminent introduction of the Ebola vaccination to contacts and contacts-of-contacts, a town hall meeting was conducted with community leaders from 87 communities in Paynesville where the current hotspot is located. The messages for the campaign were developed 23 November 2015 and will be pre-tested 24 November 2015.
- A refresher training for 65 community health volunteers was held on 22 November 2015. They were deployed in the hotspot on 23 November 2015, visited 384 households and conducted seven community dialogues/group discussions. They reached 1,039 people: 329 men, 355 women and 355 children. 48 people were counselled during house to house visits; six sick people were seen; and three people were identified as needing psychosocial support.
- UNICEF provided 12,500 pamphlets and posters to social mobilization partners on Ebola prevention.
- UNICEF is working with Government and counterparts on refocusing messaging to help raise awareness on how the community can protect themselves and prevent the spread of Ebola; immediately reporting cases, contacts, or dead bodies; dead body management, including swabbing; safe and dignified burial of bodies.
- The number of infection prevention and control (IPC), dead body management, and call centre information messages on the radio have been increased.

Innovation

- UNICEF reactivated the Trace and Go mobile based system for relatives to be updated regularly on the condition of those in ETUs.

Coordination

- UNICEF is co-lead of the WASH, Social Mobilization, and Mental Health and Psychosocial pillars with Government of Liberia counterparts.
- Education is being coordinated through UNICEF and the MoE Education in Emergencies committee set up after the closing down of the Education Cluster in October 2015.
- UNICEF has provided tents, office supplies and related equipment to set up a local Ebola Command Center (ECC) near the hotspot. The rapid response team of sector specialists are based there where daily pillar and partner meetings are being held.
- The national incident management system (IMS) meetings are also being held daily at the national Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Who to contact for further information:

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